Move locations all the time, driven by events

Lean into relationships, not just tying up old shit but new developments (a'la Wash's injury)

Well known sayings turned on their owners always land well

Special weapons with sentimental value

At the end of S17 there's nothing keeping them together anymore. But Iris is free rent and none of them want jobs especially, plus Wash is technically disabled.

Grif: Feels inadequate due to the leadership & latent strength now visible in the others. Receives the call via the Meta helmet from Locus, but ignores it
Simmons: Desires the leadership Wash, Tucker & Donut have had over the group, but doesn't realise it's just power hunger. Mad that he's been telling this to Grif and Grif passed on a new opportunity for him to lead.
Sister: Having fun stoking Simmons & Grif's insecurities. Ultimate aim is to get everyone using their first names, as they're not in the military anymore. Michael J, Vern, Dex, David, Dick, Franklin, and then whatever Sarge & Carolina's names are. Wash knows Carolina's, Simmons knows Sarge's, and she's committed to finding them out. When Sarge has his 'whiskey behind the fridge' moment he reveals his name, tipping the others off that he's about to die.
Carolina: Rehabilitating Wash. Super chill now she's retired. Writing a tell-all book about Project Freelancer. The villain is her biggest fan, because she told him of his own origins, and he's been monitoring her laptop - one of his chief aims is to capture her and learn the ending of the book. Attempts to use "Alison" to maim his mind - doesn't work, he read that chapter already.
Caboose: Working with Carolina to rehabilitate Wash. Has war games with all the military equipment he's claimed, painted Wash's team with his armor colours.
Lopez: Elder god. Controlling Caboose's war games via the Meta helmet. Designing stuff.
Wash: Struggling. Switch to his POV as a plot mechanic. Ultimately he's captured, and dismayed at his feeble mind he resolves to cooperate with Locus to relay intel from inside the belly of the beast. Lopez describes what it was like to witness the birth of the universe, which inspires Caboose to test the limits of his armor in the vacuum of space
Donut: Absent, sending postcards. The secret to defeating the villain is in a seemingly innocuous postcard ("these pigeons are hilarious, I throw my helmet in the air and they all take flight at once." - fly a Covenant capital ship over the alien cultists, freak them into leaving). Donut eventually rejoins the fight cus the villain bombed an abandoned botanical garden he found "hauntingly elegant, like a dragonfly supping on a dead robin. The garden must be avenged".
Tucker: After the loneliness of the labyrinth, he found that Junior was in his thoughts. Seeks Junior out for a reunion. Learns alien, and the two bond [subtitled]. Jr informs Tucker of the political situation. Tucker becomes the BGC's

man on the outside when their galactic quadrant is quarantined by the isolationist policies of the villain. Resolves to raise allies to fight back.
Locus: Surveilling the villain as part of a rebel network inc. Flowers, Kimball, Gray, and old friend Siris. Gets caught ep.1 ending, by his father - the villain's right hand man, a cruel killer of innocents. Locus says a dead man's switch will tell his network that the leadership has been infiltrated, that they should attack - villain retorts that it's exactly what he wants. What else could gather all his enemies in one place?
Triplets: Appeal to the BGC. Explain what's happening. Nobody believes them. But Grif received the call via Locus's dead man's switch via the Meta helmet - he confirms what they're saying. But says it's not what Wash needs right now.
Dr Gray: Turned Rambo by the destruction of her hospital. Takes to bomber piloting.
Sarge: Distressed to find he misses Donut. Becomes cheerleader for joining the rebellion, not because he's being Sarge but because nothing gets the gang back together like a good war. Gets into a flight simulator and begins training. Later he breaks down when Donut brings him souvenirs - "Your love language is gift giving, so I figured if anyone would appreciate a souvenir it's you, Sarge" / "(weeping) I must not submit to the tactical vulnerability of being known…" / "I think about you all a lot! Now that I feel accepted by you guys I find it happens all the time. For example I was thinking, a side parting would suit your face shape better than a buzzcut" / "That's- wow, that's valuable intel" / "Also I found your dating profile ("what") and you should use an actual photo of you and not the first image result for "Sarge", cus it's a picture of a cartoon character" / "How did you find my dating profile?" / "Oh I uh- found it… accidentally. I set mine to "extremely heterosexual woman" and of course that's what you were looking for. Boobies and uh. Suchlike." / (everyone looks at Sarge) "I should not have asked that." / "I'm actually asexual, I just put up *super* flattering photos and a referral code for a taxi app" / Sister: "GENIUS". Sarge discovers the internet and orders a utility shotgun, and sets about crafting unique shells for it - employing Lopez's talents as well as his own.
Doc:

Season concept: What's a bigger problem than omnipotent gods? All of humanity being on the wrong side!

Act 1 Plots

Wash's Recovery

- The gang decide to make things great for Wash when he wakes up. They put together a "Congratulations! You were shot!" party to celebrate the saviour of the world. Donut jumps out of a cake. They work a module into Wash's armour for note-taking, with a daily to-do list, that Carolina updates every morning to get around his memory issues. Morale falters when Wash is more banged up than they expected. Caboose takes him on as a project.

Caboose's War Games

- Caboose has been using the Meta helmet to prank call an army depot and threaten the fresh recruit on the front gate into delivering broken vehicles, says he's establishing "Freelancer 2" ("Lancers so free you wouldn't *believe*") and he'd better comply "or else". Iris is now filled with military vehicles. Lopez, now a sort of Bran character, is helped out of an intellectual stupor by Caboose when he's asked for help in constructing therapeutic war games for Wash to play. Lopez builds a server, works out how to fix the fried electronics of the vehicles, wires it all to the Meta helmet, and anyone wearing the helmet can now control the vehicles in the valley. Painting one half of them in Wash's armor colours ("So you don't forget which side you are!") allows them to play chess. When revealing this to Wash, however, Wash gets confused, seems unappreciative, and then melees Tucker when he goes to comfort him. He apologises and leaves, & when Carolina catches up and asks what happened we truck into Wash's face and replay the scene from his POV, with time-skips.

Locus & the Rebellion

- One source of relief for Wash is the colonies have reached a renewed peace agreement, with only Chorus still in negotiations. As a news report plays out ("-let this renewed peace between our colonies let us look outward, together, hereafter.") we enter the screen and see our villain exchanging pleasantries with the camera crew after the cut. The president walks away, chats lightheartedly with an advisor, then sits in his office, turns on a frequency jammer, and makes a mysterious-sounding call. Locus, cloaked, tells the villain he knows what's up. Villain tells Locus that cloaking technology has come from *freelancer-only* to *ubiquitous* status and he's in the most secure room on earth. Many guards decloak in the room. Locus is apprehended by Siris. His deadman's switch lets Dylan know to send a message to all members of the network to meet. Then there's a knock at her door (cut away after she walks to the door hesitantly). The villain has changed the content of the message - instead of having them engage in surveillance and expose the villain, they're all to meet in one place & choose their next move. A trap.

Act 2 Plots

Fleeing the Destruction of Iris

- Next time Wash plays chess, the Meta helmet alerts him (along with all veterans and sleeper agents) to the location of the meeting on an old unused military channel, but he gets lost in the base looking for someone, & forgets by the time he gets to tell someone ("but it was important" / "hey - nothing's more important than that you rest right now"). Later the

Triplets show up to recruit Wash & Carolina (“plus all you guys I guess”), but are rebuffed w/ Tucker leading the refusal - Wash & Lina catch a ride off them to Chorus, as Wash has an appointment with Dr Gray the next day. Suddenly Iris is bombarded to destroy “Freelancer 2” - using surface destruction weapons banned under the Treaty of Sangheili. The gang flee and go to Chorus to pick up Wash & Line. The gang find Chorus was bombed. They perform a run to ferry survivors to safety, and the gang retreat to a bar. To mourn their friends. Tucker finds a table of sangheili and asks for a ride. A huge, rowdy party of veterans unsettles the BGC, and both parties find themselves ready for a brawl - for the same reason. The veterans were late to Chorus too. This immediately leads to drunken revelry. Someone says that if it was the old days they could’ve commandeered enough material to fight with. Another veteran tells of the Massacre at Morfus, when the first EMP weapon of the Great War was used by the retreating colonists and fried multiple armies worth of equipment. Lopez adds that he can do something about that.

Locus, Wash & Lina

- Wash & Lina were intercepted, taken captive before Chorus’s bombardment. The villain shows a lot of interest in Lina. Her book on the Freelancer Project was fascinating, but she never said what happened to the AI. Just that the project was shut down. Locus learns that they’re being held in the same facility, with Wash being tortured over ‘Freelancer 2’. Locus is taunted with the news that his rebellion was destroyed, and he’s all that’s left.

Tucker & Junior

- Tucker goes to see Junior just as the colonists’ territorial borders are closed. Junior (via a series of eloquent blargs) elucidates upon the wider political situation, as he’s a minor political figure on Sangheili, and Tucker in a series of broken Duolinguo blargs replies something nonsensical. The sangheili don’t want a repeat of the Great War, but isolationism begets nationalism, and nationalism leads to expansion. Tucker & Junior become a bridge between the races, quelling a prospective invasion, instead opting to lead a task force to unseat the villain, deep in human territory, and expose them to the public. However once they leave, news arrives of the illegal surface bombardments used on Iris & Chorus. The sangheili must act.

Act 3 Plots

Boneyard of Morfus

- The gang, plus the veterans, land on Morfus and find just- so many skeletons. Via montage we see them get everything up to working order again. The teams all pair up and work together, each played to their strengths. Donut arrives, having found Sarge’s location via Tinder.

- In S16 it’s revealed Locus sent an encrypted message to the gang, but Grif crashed the ship to avoid reading it.

Part 2

- Alien war
- Wash

The Call to Adventure

First, the Meta helmet. Then the Triplets, confirming it. Still the gang refuse the call.

They are bombarded from orbit. Narrow escape. They watch their home burn.
“I knew all that military equipment was a bad idea.” / “We’re still not going to war. We can just go to Chorus, it’ll be nice to live among normal people for a while”
The news shows the villain announce the destruction of all military not loyal to the union of colonies. Including those stationed in the city of Chorus. Chorus is burning.
“Hey Grif. Where was that secret meeting again?”